

In the Claims

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for attaching a pad of friction material to a backing plate comprising:

at least one rigid structure attached to said backing plate in at least two places, said structure operatively arranged to form at least one closed loop with said backing plate, wherein said structure is fabricated from friction material.

2. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 1 wherein said structure is operatively arranged to be surrounded by said pad.

3. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 1 wherein said structure is mechanically attached to said backing plate.

4-5 (withdrawn)

6. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 1 wherein said structure is a pair of "U" shaped loops, each of said loops having a pair of legs, said legs attached to said backing plate.

7. (cancelled)

8-14 (withdrawn)

15. (currently amended) An apparatus for holding a pad, comprising:

a backing plate; and,

at least one rigid closed loop structure emanating from and fixedly secured to said backing plate, wherein said at least one structure is fabricated from friction material.

16. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 15 wherein said pad is a brake pad.

17. (original) The apparatus recited in Claim 15 wherein said pad is a clutch pad.

18. (currently amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

a backing plate;

at least one rigid closed loop structure emanating from and fixedly secured to said

backing plate, wherein said at least one structure is fabricated from friction material; and

a pad of friction material at least partially surrounding said structure.

19. (original) The article recited in Claim 18 wherein said pad is a disc brake pad.

20. (original) The article recited in Claim 18 wherein said pad is a drum brake pad.

21. (original) The article recited in Claim 18 wherein said pad is a clutch pad.

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